

## COMPRESIÓN ESCRITA NIVEL INTERMEDIO

Read the following text. For questions 1-5, choose the alternative A,B, C or D which fits best according to the text.

### FATHERS FIGHT FOR FAMILY FLEXI-TIME

Growing numbers of men are rejecting the culture of working long hours in favour of spending more time at home, according to a study which reveals a social revolution is taking place as fathers become increasingly involved in bringing up their children.

Men are a substantial and fast-rising proportion of those seeking their employer's permission to work flexi-time, with shorter hours or fewer days. But they face more obstacles to securing a better work-life balance than women.

In the last two years 1.2 million men, around 10 per cent of the male workforce, have asked their employer if they can work flexibly. That is far less than the 2.3 million women (19 per cent) who have sought the same change in their hours, but a big increase on previous years.

'More men are seeking the right to switch to working flexi-time, a nine-day fortnight or four-day week so they can be around to help their children and partners. And even more would do so if the rules on flexible working were changed so that all workers, not just parents, could do that', said Jo Morris, the TUC's work-life balance policy officer.

Jenny Watson, the chair of the Equal Opportunities Commission, said the TUC's research confirmed that Britain was in the middle of 'a social revolution' in how much time fathers want to spend with their families. More fathers are more concerned to be more involved with their families than ever before. Their desire to do so is moving faster than politicians' attitude to this. 'This is a very private revolution, which often happens within a family that has to make a decision about childcare, and it has gone relatively unnoticed by those making public policy', said Watson.

'While some employers are good on flexible working, in other workplaces there can be an assumption that flexible working is for mothers, and fathers can find it not just hard to get but even hard to ask for it, because the prevailing culture is that, if you request it, you aren't serious about your job,' said Watson.

Since April 2003 parents of children under six have been able to ask their employer to vary their hours of work. But employers are only legally obliged to give "reasonable consideration" to such requests.

'Employers' greater unwillingness to let male workers change their hours is unhealthy because it reinforces the pattern of women with children being locked into low-hours and low-paid jobs and deepens women's financial dependence on men, such as in their pension prospects in old age,' said Morris.

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<sup>1</sup> Trade Union Congress

Although allowing flexible working leads to happier, more productive employees and greater staff retention, some employers see it as difficult to implement and unfair to other workers. There is a slow but definite trend towards a woman being the breadwinner in a growing number of households. The number of men choosing not to work at all so that they can look after their home or children has risen according to the Office of National Statistics.

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0. The number of men interested in flexi-time
  - A- is bigger than that of women.
  - B- **is increasing.** ✓
  - C- is moving fast.
  - D- is the same as some years ago.
  
1. If given the choice, more men would like to
  - A- bring up their children instead of working.
  - B- cut down on working hours.
  - C- look after their children on their own.
  - D- spend little time with their children.
  
2. Men are trying to
  - A- get bosses permission to work less.
  - B- get a better balance than women.
  - C- get a better time-table to act as fathers
  - D- work fewer hours than women.
  
3. In Britain, a 'social revolution' is taking place because
  - A- fathers are asking for better working conditions
  - B- fathers are more interested in their families.
  - C- fathers are moving faster than politicians.
  - D- fathers have to decide about childcare.
  
4. According to some employers,
  - A- fathers cannot ask for flexi-time.
  - B- fathers are not taken seriously.
  - C- flex-time is appropriate for mothers.
  - D- flexi-time is legally compulsory
  
5. Flexi-time working
  - A- produces satisfied workers.
  - B- has greater advantages for employers.
  - C- causes unemployment among men.
  - D- means that women are now the bread-winners.

## Task 2

**Gap fill. (10 marks)** Read the text and complete each blank with ONE suitable word from the list supplied transferring the word chosen to the numbered boxes below. Four of the words are not to be used. (0) is done as an example.

<del>believe</del>	both	discuss	due	either	for
largely	likely	occur	of	rate	receipt
recipe	results	secondary	side	suggests	

Most people (0) believe that the biggest grounds for divorce are (1) \_\_\_\_\_ infidelity or arguments over money. However, a new report from British law firm Gateley (2) \_\_\_\_\_ otherwise. According to its analysis of 350 divorce cases, seven out of ten divorces (3) \_\_\_\_\_ because of disputes over who does what household chores. Twenty per cent of divorces are (4) \_\_\_\_\_ to unfaithfulness. Gateley says gone are the days when the wife did all the cooking and cleaning. Dual income marriages now mean split responsibilities (5) \_\_\_\_\_ vacuuming, doing the dishes and tidying. Gateley advised couples to (6) \_\_\_\_\_ who does what before walking down the aisle. A spokeswoman said that, "going into a marriage blind could be a (7) \_\_\_\_\_ for disaster".

Conversely, a study in Norway suggests that couples who share household chores are more (8) \_\_\_\_\_ to split up. Thomas Hansen, co-author of the report 'Equality in the Home,' said the divorce (9) \_\_\_\_\_ among couples who shared housework equally was 50 per cent higher than for those where women did all the work. Mr Hansen said that in Norway women did most of the housework in 70 percent of marriages, and were " (10) \_\_\_\_\_ happy" to do so. An adverse (11) \_\_\_\_\_ effect of marital discord is that many families are now "too poor to split up". The U.K. charity Relate said that in many middle-income families, couples stay together because they can't afford to divorce. Relate says this (12) \_\_\_\_\_ in a "toxic" home environment.

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12